

## Teacher Resource: Text Comprehension

**Text Comprehension** is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language.

(The RAND Reading Study Group, 2002)

### Reading for Deeper Understanding

Before Reading	During Reading	After Reading
Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set a purpose for reading</li><li>• Preview the text to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Activate and build background knowledge</li><li>○ Make predictions</li></ul></li></ul>	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make connections to background knowledge</li><li>• Monitor understanding</li><li>• Predict and confirm</li><li>• Infer meaning</li><li>• Adjust reading rate and reread when necessary</li><li>• Determine importance</li><li>• Generate questions to clarify understanding</li><li>• Develop precise interpretation of text</li></ul>	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summarize/Synthesize</li><li>• Reread for clarification</li><li>• Draw conclusions</li><li>• Evaluate information <u>and</u> personal use of strategies</li><li>• Assimilate information into knowledge base</li><li>• Understand the author's purpose in writing</li><li>• Identify and analyze how word choice shapes the meaning of text</li></ul>

#### Pre-Reading Guidelines

1. Teachers must read the text ahead of time to determine:
  - a. the purpose of the reading lesson
  - b. what their students bring to the text
  - c. what pre-reading information should be provided
  - d. how and when to provide pre-reading lessons to accomplish the purpose
2. Amount of time spent on most pre-reading activities/lessons should be brief and brevity should be determined in proportion to the amount and duration of the reading.
3. Pre-reading lessons should stimulate students' curiosity so that there is a desire to read the text.
4. Pre-reading lessons should not reveal information that students could acquire simply by reading the text.
5. Not all pre-reading lessons have to take place before reading. There is a possibility of stopping along the way during the reading to look forward (hypothesizing or predicting, for the next part of the reading). Thus, "pre-reading" could take place after a considerable amount of reading has already been accomplished.
6. Pre-reading lessons can focus on words and concepts that students are not likely to know or be able to determine from context and are needed for understanding the text.

*Word of Caution:* If pre-reading is always conducted in the same manner using the same techniques, teachers are probably weakening rather than strengthening the reader.

Adapted from Shanahan, T., "[Part 2: Practical Guidance on Pre-Reading Lessons](#)," Shanahan on Literacy, March 20, 2012.  
and Revised Publishers' Criteria for the CCSS in English Language Arts and Literacy, Grades 3-12.

<b>Instructional Technique/Activity</b>	<b>During Reading</b>	<b>After Reading</b>
Analogy Charting	✓	✓
Chapter Tours	✓	
Close Reading: Text- Dependent Questions	✓	✓
Concept/Definition Mapping	✓	✓
Different Perspectives		✓
Discussion Web		✓
Double Entry Diaries	✓	✓
First Person Reading	✓	✓
Follow the Characters		✓
History Change Frame	✓	
History Memory Bubbles	✓	✓
Inquiry Charts	✓	✓
Interactive Reading Guides	✓	
Magnet Summaries		✓
Paired Reviews		✓
Point-of-View Study Guide	✓	✓
Power Notes	✓	✓
Proposition/Support Outline	✓	
Pyramid Diagram	✓	✓
Question-Answer Relationships	✓	✓
Questioning Chart	✓	✓
Questioning the Author	✓	✓
RAFT (Role/Audience/Format/Topic)		✓
Role Playing as Readers	✓	✓
Save the Last Word for Me		✓
Story Mapping	✓	✓
Structured Note Taking	✓	✓
Student-Friendly Vocabulary Explanations		✓
Template Frames		✓
Text Coding	✓	
Vocabulary Overview Guide		✓
Word Family Trees		✓
Written Conversations		✓
Adapted from: Buehl, D. (2009). <i>Classroom strategies for interactive learning</i> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> ed. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.		

## Gradual Release of Responsibility

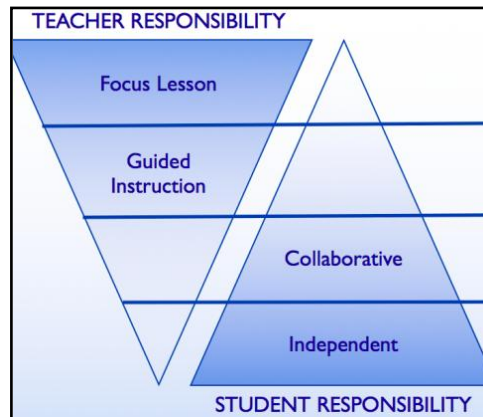
This evidence-based sequence of instruction is appropriate to use when teaching thinking/comprehension strategies (predict, infer, summarize, synthesize, etc.). This teaching model begins with the teacher assuming responsibility through direct instruction that involves modeling and then transitioning the students to taking on responsibility for learning by gradually removing scaffolds until the students are independently applying the strategy.

**Focus Lesson:** The teacher models own metacognitive process during a brief focus lesson as students listen and observe.

**Guided Instruction:** Students participate with a great deal of scaffolding as the teacher prompts and leads students through a learning activity(s).

**Collaborative Learning:** The teacher decreases the scaffolding to function more as a coach by observing, confirming understanding and evaluating. Students apply learning to problem solve, self-correct, and extend understanding with peers.

**Independent Application:** The teacher provides students with practice in applying skills and strategies in new situations. Students become active readers and capable learners.



It is important to understand that the gradual release of responsibility model is not linear. Students move back and forth among each of the components as they master skills, strategies, and standards.

(Adapted from <http://www.monterey.k12.ca.us/ed-services/release-of-responsibility>)

## Signal/Cue Words

Signal (or cue) words are important to readers because they can assist comprehension. These words warn the reader to pay attention to a particular pattern within the text. Particular words and/or phrases may be used to indicate chronological order, to present similarities or differences, or set up a cause and effect relationship.

The following list provides extensive examples of signal (cue) words used across grade levels.

Description/Classification		
Like	For example	Examples
Emotion Words	Colors	Numbers
Procedure/policy/process with details		Words which engage the readers' senses
Compare/Contrast		
However	Similarity	In contrast
Substitute	Instead of	Where as
Even though	Like...as	More importantly
Although	Think of	The second thing
But	Or	Liken
Resemble	Oppose	Despite that
Opposite	Similes	Otherwise
Metaphors	In addition to	Analogies
Question/Answer		
Because	Even though	Despite that
Actually	For example	In spite of
Perhaps	Look for a question mark (?)	
Problem/Solution		
Because	Cost	The
Despite that	Resolved	Otherwise
Result	Possibly	Clarification
Fault	Tribulation	In conclusion
Annoyance	Conflict	My conclusion
Worry	Question	Distress
Puzzle	Disturbance	Difficulty
Perhaps	Perplexity	Prior history
Trouble	In reference	Malfunction
Since	If	Accordingly
In fact	A solution	Consequence
Answer	In efforts to	Mishap
Thus	Could be	Concerned
Argued	Problem	
Cause/Effect		
Because	In the end	The results are
Produces	A cause of	It influences
Creates	Therefore	It would induce
So	Then	Another reason
From	If	This meant
Why	The sequel	Since
As a consequence		It started when
Sequence		
First, second	To begin with	In the beginning
Last	On	In conclusion
Finally	Today	It started when
Long ago	It began on	Long, long ago
Now	Previously	Next prior to
Before long	Not long after	The second thing
Later	Look at adverbs and prepositions	